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ABSTRACT

Written for the wide range of practitioners working with young children, this book offers guidance on both the theory and the practical management of drama in the early years. The book emphasizes the relationship between pretend play and the cognitive and affective development of young children, and highlights children's need to experience quality talk and their engagement in narrative through story-making. Part 1 of the book, "Understanding Dramatic Activity," examines theories from the disciplines of psychology and drama that show the importance of educational drama, looking at all aspects of the curriculum to explore the range of areas affected by its engagement. Part 2, "Managing Dramatic Activity," provides examples and ideas for using drama within the curriculum to help develop children's social, cognitive, and language skills as well as an appreciation for drama as an art form. This part considers progression, assessment, and evaluation to help practitioners and other adults build up their observational skills in assessing drama in early years settings. The book concludes by highlighting the significance of talk and the development of oral language in the early years and the potential of drama to engage children in different kinds of talk and contrasting forms of thinking. The conclusion maintains that drama should not be seen as an optional extra but as a crucial learning tool that develops the whole child. (Contains 112 references.) (KB)

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